Exploit, Innovate and Compare Local, National and Global Arts: A new Paradigm of Curricular and Research Management

C.S.H.N.Murthy[1]

[1] Professor in Mass Communication and Journalism, Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, Tezpur University, Napaam,Tezpur, Assam, India.
cshnmurthy@yahoo.co.in

Abstract The 'Design Thinking' is a post-globalization concept to offer innovations in designing based on the consumer needs which includes services or redesigning existing products. The chapter deals with not only my personal encounters with 'Design Thinking, which I had taken up as a media expert for designing innovative educational models for Government of Eritrea during 2003-2005, but also with my conceptualization of a designing a model of communication that explains how Indian culture comprising six arts (Painting, Drawing, Sculpting, Music, Dance and Drama) has the potential to connect with mass communication (e.g.*Saadharanikaran* model of communication emerging from *Natyashastra*) and how it fosters research and funding by cross-connecting communication with these art forms in Indian Universities offering different programmes in arts and humanities. The chapter further dwells on how 'Design Thinking' emerged as a multi-faceted programme, with its application not being restricted to just designing the products but extending to localized needs of communities through innovation/problem solving solutions that can be modified by adoption for various other cultures varying in requirements. The compulsion of achieving global homogeneity in communication sciences resulted in a monotony depriving Indian students/research scholars of the art of 'think out of the box' and running/administering their own media/mass communication departments from the perspective of connecting with local arts and native cultures.

Keywords*: Design Thinking, Eritrea, India, Educational and E-learning models, Indian Universities, Arts and Humanities, Local and Native cultures, Research, Funding and administering, etc.*

1 Introduction

This chapter primarily intends to explore the possibility of applying the concept of 'Design Thinking' to Indian culture, comprising arts such as dance, music, songs, painting, sculpture, etc., for developing innovative communication models that

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explains the semiotics of commonalities and divergences embedded in Indian core culture and cross-cultures. Before dwelling on this further, I would like to dwell on how I have come face to face with the need of 'Design Thinking' in the context of developing educational models for a developing nation, and how I propose to relate this expertise to 'designing cultural models' for Indian fine art traditions.

At the outset, I intend to explain how 'Design Thinking' had been extremely helpful to me as an academic while I was working abroad (in Asmara, Eritrea, a Sub-Saharan African Country located in the North East Africa) during 2003-2005, and after my returning to India as well. Eritrea, which got liberated in 1993 (May 24) from the federation of Ethiopia, needed innovative educational planning using latest media technologies (Murthy 2006a, b). As an external media expert to the Department of Adult and Media Education from India under the UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) funding, I was assigned the task to design media strategies for faster implementation of educational programmes through available radio and television and hired satellite technology. This was quite an essential programme for Eritrea as it was funded heavily by the World Bank and its associate international bodies such as UNDP[2], USAID[3] UNESCO[4], IDA[5], etc for bringing a rapid change in its educational and vocational skills that supports its fragile donor dependent economy. Further, Eritrea embraced the Millennium Development Goals within the frame work of Dakar[6] resolution and has fixed its targets in such a way that it would achieve a turn around by 2015 A.D (Murthy 2006 a, b).

In order to accomplish this task, I had, first, to familiarize myself with the geographical and cultural facets of Eritrea extensively. It was after thorough reading and discussing with the stake holders and the officials of the department that I embarked upon 'Design Thinking' and had finally arrived at a different educational model (Fig 1) that can be effectively implemented through frequency modulated (F.M.) radio and television stations coupled with interactive computer technology (ICT) at the grass root level (Murthy 2006 a, 2006 b).

It was around this time that the 'Design Thinking' as a creative process has begun to evolve as a consequence of post-globalization when the consumer needs have to be addressed primarily from innovations in technology (Florida 2002; Martin 2010; Pink 2006). Although the concept of 'innovations in communication technology and its diffusion' has a long history, beginning with the highly creative and scholarly work of Rogers (1962), who was also a Stanford scholar, the development of innovation as a curricular module at the University level has come into existence with the leading conceptual work of Lugmayr (2012a) and his team at EMMi Lab.

According to Lugmayr et al, 'Design Thinking' is a 'cross disciplinary and user centered method' which is an approach towards the discovery of solutions and sparks innovative thinking in many ways (2015: p.119) It allows, say Lugmayr et al (2015), to understand user needs and understand their problems in

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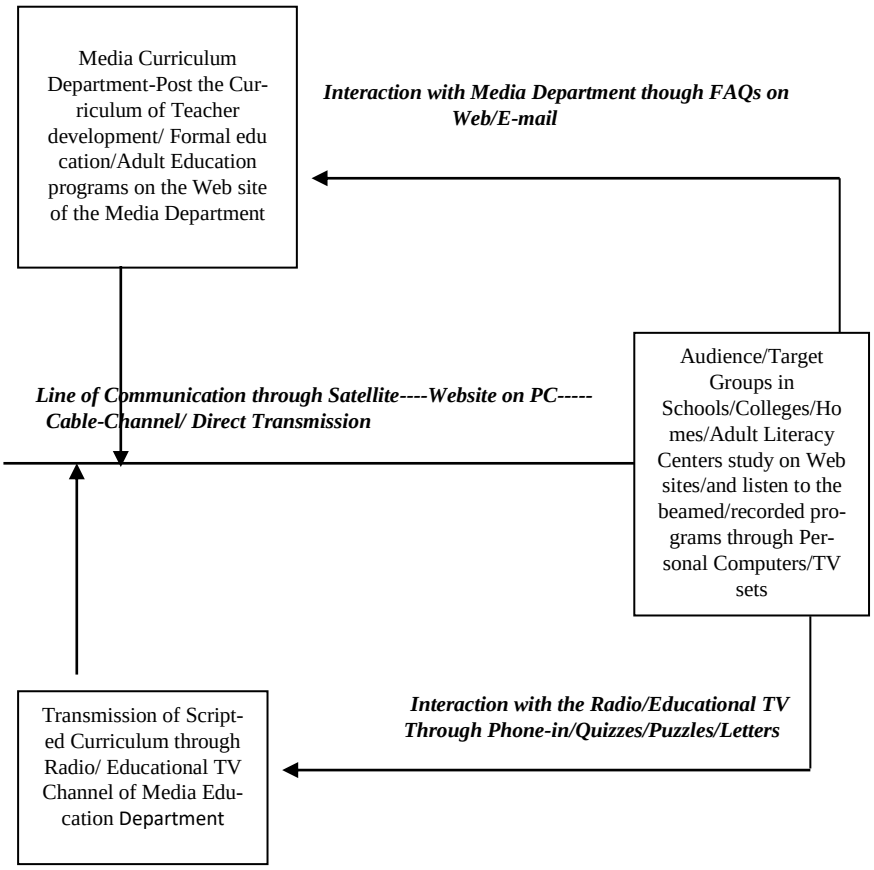
Media Curriculum Department-Post the Curriculum of Teacher development/ Formal education/Adult Education programs on the Web site of the Media Department
Interaction with Media Department though FAQs on Web/E-mail
Audience/Target Groups in Schools/Colleges/Homes/Adult Literacy Centers study on Web sites/and listen to the beamed/recorded programs through Personal Computers/TV sets
Line of Communication through Satellite----Website on PC----- Cable-Channel/ Direct Transmission
Interaction with the Radio/Educational TV Through Phone-in/Quizzes/Puzzles/Letters
Transmission of Scripted Curriculum through Radio/ Educational TV Channel of Media Education Department

Fig. 1. Media and ICT Role in Distance Education
(A Model Developed for Department of Adult and Media Education, Government of Eritrea), Developed by: C.S.H.N. Murthy (2004), Courtesy: *Journal of Adult and Continuing Education*, NIACE, UK (2006)

daily life. It is also a strategy as conceived by Brown (2008, 2009, & 2010) who, applying the thesis of Piaget (1978), defines it as follows:

> He defines design thinking roughly as 'a discipline that uses the designer's sensibility and methods to match peoples' needs with what is technologically feasible and what a viable business strategy can convert into customer value and market opportunity (Piaget, 1978).

Lugmayr et al. (2015) have put the 'Design Thinking' as an idealized process model, usually of iterative or non-linear nature in the modern publications (p.124). Brown (2008) categorized 'Design Thinking' into activities in three inter-

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related, non-linear activity spaces: inspiration, ideation and implementation. They viewed the emerging idealized process as:

> …model outlined by Stanford d school and HPI School of Design thinking, commonly referred to as the Design Thinking process, is an iterative process with six interdependent phases outlined in Fig 2 (1). The model aims not to be a linear model, but rather characterizes roughly, much like Brown's interpretation, the activities associated with certain spaces within the full design process (model not shown in this paper; refer to Lugmayr, 2015 for Fig.2.1)

From the foregoing it is obvious that what I had done for the Government of Eritrea was obviously from the user needs, falling under the category of service design, and the designing was obviously an innovation with the combination of technology though it varied with the methods that Lugmayr et al., described in his latest paper in detail (2015; compare the methods described and the processes followed in the work of Murthy 2006 a, b). In order to explain how my model has fit into the term innovation, I need to brief here the context and conditions under which I have designed the model. Achieving rapid educational transformation has been the primary task of newly formed country Eritrea to gain economic sustainability.

While the regular formal education, despite the boost from the Government, has not yielded the desirable results, the Government of Eritrea has looked at other options which would have the drive and energy to overcome the hurdles posed by its complicated economy and topography. But, the limitations of distance education are well documented by Ljosa (1992, 1998). At the same time, the 'industrialization' has ushered in the 'privatization' of 'institutional learning'. Consequently, it gave way to an innovation in developing distance education using educational technology which permits two-way communication between the teacher and the student, similar to the classroom experience (Keegan 1986, 1995; Holmberg 1986). Garrison and Shale (1990) argued against over emphasizing the mere technical term 'distance' and trying to explore the demerits of it on the basis of the physical separation of the two important partners, the teacher and the student. On the other hand, they favored placing the emphasis on 'education', although it is non-contiguous. Nevertheless, they too favored the two way communication between the teacher and the students and to achieve this they advocated the use of technology.

In this context, Garrison and Shale (1990) described and discussed various distance educational technologies from the perspective of their communication characteristics. Communication technology is classified into two categories. (1) Two-way communication technology consists of three generations or distinct types: print (correspondence); telecommunications (teleconferencing), computer based; (2) The use of telecommunications in distance education added a new impetus to educational methodology even by the media, radio and TV. Torstein (1992) suggested a computer-mediated two-way communication in distance education, which he called 'computer conferencing'. My task here was how to modify it technologically to render it suitable to Eritrean conditions.

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With regard to converting the above into an educational technology that could reach every corner of Eritrea, I designed the technology in a three step process (see below) that can be implemented as in Figure 1 (see above). Further, the insights into designing the course curriculum and developing the audio-visual technology are drawn on the basis of the earlier works of Baath (1984) and Bates, T. A. (1984). The following steps explain the model given in Fig. 1(see Murthy 2006 a).

Step I. The designed course and curriculum would be further developed into units/lessons for each subject, which would be posted on a web site. The web site would be launched or commenced once the modalities are finalized, with appropriate defining of hierarchy and job description.

Step II. From the posted or developed curriculum, scripts would be developed for broadcasts/ telecasts with appropriate production schedules.

Step III. The targeted group would receive the material posted on the web site alongside other transmissions to their personal computer/TV via cable connection or through direct satellite transmission at home, school, college or adult learning centre. They would use the material on the web site for study and would attend to all the programme sites given on the web, including Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). In the case of persisting difficulty in understanding or solving a problem, or the need for additional information or a question answering system (by email or phone-in), they adopt the 'feedback mechanism'.

The target group sends their feedback in the form of questions, doubts and suggestions either by E-mail or by filling in a questionnaire and submitting it via the internet. They would receive replies to their specific problems within a stipulated time from the curriculum section of the Media Education Department. In the case of radio and TV transmissions, feedback is via phone-in programmes at specific times or by writing letter directly to the department. Sometimes, feedback from listeners could be in the form of puzzles, quizzes, etc.

The theoretical grounding done in laying down the media strategies for the Ministry of Non-formal education was subject to refinement over the period of application of the same by the users and stake holders of Government of Eritrea. The 'Design Thinking' in education—formal or non-formal—is not any new approach. 'Design thinking' has been suggested for use in schools in a variety of curricular ways, as well as for redesigning student spaces and school systems. Design thinking in education typically takes three forms: helping school administrators solve institution-based problems, aiding educators develop more creative lesson plans, and engendering design thinking skills in students (Bowler 2014; Leverenz 2014; Linonen and Durall 2014; Razzouk and Shute 2012). Similarly, integrating education with computer mediation—Interactive Computer Technology (ICT)—is also new. Of late many educators have begun to place a lot of emphasis on computer mediated education for different learning settings depending

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on the user needs (Dillenbourg et al 2009; Bosingnore et al 2013). In all the above contexts, the education is treated as 'culture', and problem solving occurred through 'Design Thinking' for cultural mediation.

Back in India, I have continued to grapple with the concept of 'Design Thinking'. I have not only involved myself in 'designing E-learning programmes for the farmers for rural transformation' (2008) but also examined how helpful are the designs of websites of the State Governments (Murthy 2010) and the Universities in the North-East from the end users' perspectives (Murthy et al 2011). All these works are based on user needs and follow the three step model of Brown and Wyatt (2010)—inspiration, ideation, implementation. At the same time, they vary with Lugmayr's (2012) work as the settings in which Lugmayr proposed to carry out the 'Design Thinking' as a method of evolving new course-curriculum for students is different from that of mine. Lugmayr's work is essentially grounded in the University settings. However, the experience of 'Design Thinking' in one setting will be of immense value in another setting also in terms of adoption of certain methods and principles common for both settings. Brown and Wyatt (2010) have pointed out that there is no linearity in following the six various phases in 'Design Thinking'. In my view all six phases need not be applied whether when one's designing relates to a community designing or an institutional designing.

2 Review of Literature

Brown and Wyatt (2010) have opined that 'Design thinking' incorporates constituent or consumer insights in depth and rapid prototyping, all aimed at getting beyond the assumptions that block effective solutions. According to them, the 'Design thinking—inherently optimistic, constructive, and experiential—addresses the needs of the people who will consume a product or service and the infrastructure that enables it'. They further observed:

> A better starting point is for designers to go out into the world and observe the actual experiences of smallholder farmers, schoolchildren, and community health workers as they improvise their way through their daily lives. Working with local partners who serve as interpreters and cultural guides is also important, as well as having partners make introductions to communities, helping build credibility quickly and ensuring understanding. Through "home stays" and shadowing locals at their jobs and in their homes, design thinkers become embedded in the lives of the people they are designing for.

In fact 'Design Thinking' has its humble beginning with designing products for commercial, industrial, and corporate establishments. The early 'design thinking' is mostly in relation to the work of architects and urban town planners. Faste (1994) expanded on McKim's work (*Experiences in Visual Thinking,* 1973) at Stanford University during 1990s, teaching 'design thinking' as a method of creative action. Design thinking was adapted for business purposes by Faste's

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Stanford colleague David M. Kelley, who founded IDEO[7] (*eye-dee-oh*) in 1991.Richard Buchanan's 1992 article "Wicked Problems in Design Thinking" expressed a broader view of 'design thinking' as addressing intractable human concerns through design.

It is generally interpreted by many scholars hailing from a range of academic domains that many design fields lie between Science and the Arts and Humanities, and that design may be seen as its own distinct way of understanding the world, based on solution-based problem solving, problem shaping, synthesis, and appropriateness in the built environment. Cross (1994) set out to show the differences between the humanities, the sciences, and design in his paper "*Designerly Ways of Knowing"*. He observed that:

The phenomenon of study in each culture is

- in the sciences: the natural world
- in the humanities: human experience
- in design: the artificial world

The appropriate methods in each culture are

- in the sciences: controlled experiment, classification, analysis
- in the humanities: analogy, metaphor, evaluation
- in design: modeling, pattern-forming, synthesis

The values of each culture are

- in the sciences: objectivity, rationality, neutrality, and a concern for "truth"
- in the humanities: subjectivity, imagination, commitment, and a concern for "justice"
- in design: practicality, ingenuity, empathy , and a concern for "appropriateness"

Thus, whatever one may prefer to term 'Design Thinking' as one belonging to architecture, or science or mathematics, ultimately it is a 'culture' by its own/self. The very fact that IDEO has been developing various designs for its products-ranging from eatable consumables to electronic consumables--right from its titles to cover design, colors and for their advertisements--the underlying principle behind design thinking lies in adapting cultures of native populations for problem solving—be it promoting sales, or fostering a new taste or a culture of eating.

According to Lugmayr (2015), Martin sees the concept of 'Design Thinking' similar to that of Stanford's Design Thinking. He approaches the 'Design Thinking', defining it as the dynamic interplay balancing between analytical mystery and intuitive originality (Lugmayr 2015: p.126). Martin looks at 'Design

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Thinking' as a form of thought that, when mastered, offers lasting, long term-business advantage. Brown (2008) has suggested five personality traits for the ability to do 'Design Thinking'. They are: empathy, integrative thinking, optimism, experimentalism and collaboration. According to Lugmayr (2015) these traits are essential to lead a team of 'Design Thinking' successfully either in an industrial setting or in a university. As mentioned above, these may not strictly apply to community settings.

For instance, Jerry Sternin, founder of the Positive Deviance Initiative and an Associate Professor at Tufts University, has adopted a method called 'positive deviance' to improve the conditions of nutrition of Vietnamese children who were suffering from malnutrition during 1990s. Regarding the immense contribution and value of Sternin and his wife's work in Vietnam, Brown and Wyatt (2010) writes:

> The Sternins and colleagues from Save Children surveyed four local Quong Xuong communities in the province of Than Hoa and asked for examples of 'very very poor' families whose children were healthy. They then observed the food preparation, cooking and serving behaviours of these six families, called as 'positive deviants' and found a few consistent yet rare behaviours. Parents of well-nourished children collected shrimps, crabs and snails from rice paddies and added them to food, along with the greens from sweet potatoes. Although these foods were readily available, they were typically not eaten because they were considered unsafe for children. The positive deviants also fed their children multiple smaller meals, which allowed small stomachs to hold and digest more food each day. The Sternins and the rest group worked with the positive deviants to offer cooking classes to the families of children suffering from malnutrition. By the end of the program's first year, 80% of the 1000 children enrolled in the program were adequately nourished. In addition the effort had been replicated within 14 villages across Vietnam.

Brown and Wyatt (2010) therefore cited the above work as a good example of 'Design Thinking' which lies on local expertise to uncover local solutions. They state that the design thinkers look for work-arounds and improvise solutions like the shrimps, crabs, and snails, and they find ways to incorporate those into the offerings they create.

Since the purpose of this chapter is to throw light on how 'Design thinking' can be related to local cultures through native arts/art forms, I wish to offer here a few insights in to what I am trying to conceptualize from which the faculty and students in media departments can develop various designs of models of communication existent among different art forms followed by different cultures after following some of relevant the steps the Lugmayr et al (2015) described in their administering of the course for their students at University of Tampere by the collaboration of Entertainment and Media Management Lab (EMMi Lab), Tampere University of Technology (TUT) and Tampere University of Applied Sciences.

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3 Relating Culture to Design Thinking: A Case for Indian Media Education

India is a highly populous country, next to China, in the World. It is one of the ancient civilizations in the World with a rich heritage of knowledge (*Vedas*[8], *Upanishdas*, *Epics like Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, *Bhagavatam*, *etc.*, and other sciences such as architecture, sculpture, painting, poetry, astronomy, medicine, and arts: dance, music and song besides spiritual music and singing traditions such as *bhajans and keertans*). India is considered as a torchbearer of knowledge in the East even by the reckoning of Western scholars like Frederich Max Muller (1823-1900). In his "What can India teach us?" lecture at University of Cambridge, he championed ancient Sanskrit literature and India as follows:

> If I were to look over the whole world to find out the country most richly endowed with all the wealth, power, and beauty that nature can bestow – in some parts a very paradise on earth – I should point to India. If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most full developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problems of life, and has found solutions of some of them which well deserve the attention even of those who have studied Plato and Kant – I should point to India. And if I were to ask myself from what literature we, here in Europe, we who have been nurtured almost exclusively on the thoughts of Greeks and Romans, and of one Semitic race, the Jewish, may draw that corrective which is most wanted in order to make our inner life more perfect, more comprehensive, more universal, in fact more truly human, a life, not for this life only, but a transfigured and eternal life – again I should point to India (Max Müller, 1883).

But, as fate would have it, India was a colonial nation for over four centuries under various rulers, the last being the British, during which time, it had learnt much to borrow from the West than independently and creatively sustain and support itself. Even after independence in 1947, much of India's development was a consequence of imported education and technology. I can elaborate on this in greater detail, for the sake of saving space. But it would suffice to say that our media policy and education, especially the programme Mass Communication and Journalism being implemented at the University or Institute level in India, is largely a duplication of the US media programmes and policies (Murthy 2011).

The early trainers of media management in India were from the US schools of media programme and they had largely ensured that the US syllabus and curriculum operate in Indian institutions also. In a way, this has taken away any independent approach from the side of Indian intelligentsia/academia to initiate an Indian programme in media—mass communication and journalism. As a result, Indian media departments at the University/Institution level turned out to be *faith accompli* lacking in nativity and originality. The research, innovation and improvisation in media have been stretched out to meet the theories of Western research and its dominant paradigm (top to bottom) models of communication for development with or without relevance. Thus, for long, Indian media research and designing has lacked in local or native frames of communication but for the SITE

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experiment in 1975 which could be a legitimately described as an innovation through 'Design Thinking' (See Murthy 2015 for an update on it). Both the rural experiments of Kheda (1975-90) and Jhabua (1983-98; Murthy 2015) also fell under the same category through 'innovation by Design Thinking' though many Western academics (except US and UK) might not be aware of it.

3.1 Saadharanikaran: *The First Indian Designing of Cultural Communication*

However, in the late 1980s, Yadava (1979, 87) and Tiwari (1980) have pointed out to the possibility of developing an Indian programme in communication based on the work of *Bharatmuni*[9] who developed *Natyasastra*[10] (Science of Indian Dance as an Art). Adhikary (2008, 2009) has observed that though Yadava and Tewari should be given credit for drawing attention of communication scholars that there is a theory named *Saadharanikaran* (in the *Natyashastra),* which is a theory of communication, they are not the original theorists and they were just authors who wrote about what was already there. It was *Bhattanayaka*, who developed the theory of *Saadharanikaran*. He did so while explaining the *Rasa Sutra* of Bharata's *Natyashastra*. Many other scholars in Sanskrit contributed to the discourse of *Saadharanikarana*.The cream of *rasa* theory hinges on the concept of *Sahridaya* (receptive heart). The essence of *Natyashastra* is to pass this experience to the spectator or audience. Inspired by the semiotics of *Natyashastra*, for the first time, Nirmala Adhikari (2009) has done her pioneering research by bringing out the communication model embedded in *Natyashastra*. She has further compared it with Carey's Ritual model of Communication, and proved how Indian Communication model emerging from *Natyashastra* is far superior to Ritual Communication model. The Indian communication model, as enunciated by Nirmala Adhikary, is a multilinear model based on a range of parameters and is mostly audience/receiver centric.

This is the beginning of 'Design Thinking' for producing an indigenous communication model in India. Further, Yadava (1979, 1987) has described the 'communication model' inherent in village communication. These are the early pioneering studies using 'culture' as major in put in 'Design Thinking' which culminated in 'think out of box' research when it comes to developing an Indian centric media management programme.

While the dance forms have contributed to *Saadaharanikaran* model of Communication (called as SMC), the other arts --Painting, Drawing, Sculpting, Music and Dance--have multiple models of communication, relevant to the contemporary culture from where they emerged, embedded in them; but they are not fully explored yet. These art forms have the potential to offer a number of innovations by 'Design Thinking' both within the regional context and national context. Further, these forms have the ability to connect glocally as well (Murthy 2014).

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For instance, by examining and deconstructing the dance forms available in the sculpture on the temple doors and walls of ancient Indian temple architecture, many scholars have reconstructed the ancient dance traditions such as *Bharatanatyam* (Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh), *Kuchipudi* (Andhra Pradesh), *Perini* (Telangana), etc. After their reconstruction, these dance forms revealed the deviant forms and postures from the ones prescribed in the *Natyashastra*. These deviations have come into the corpous of the main dance form *Bharatanatyam* due to the local cultural and religious variations (Murthy 2014). These variations in the dance forms were not just by chance/accident but by careful 'Design Thinking' (of the then dance experts) which would also reveal the clues of then contemporary culture Murthy 2014). It is this discovery of these clues that would help 'Design Thinking' for 'redesigning a product' connecting the local culture and its populations very quickly.

In the process, these researches/findings would also disclose the communication models embedded in them. Further, the 'Design Thinking' here will further help deconstruct the differences in the use/application of semiotics between the classical dance forms and folk dance forms. These revelations would have far reaching impact on developing product designs that quickly connect the local communities—both folk and the elite. In developing countries like India, there is a distinct difference in the consumption between elite and folk/masses be it entertainment or infotainment or product choice. An unearthing of these subtleties will yield a rich repertoire of information that helps innovate both the art forms as well as the products based on these art forms through 'Design Thinking'. However, it requires a lot of traditional knowledge and learning of ancient cultures/habits/customs through a deeper ethnographic study.

3.2 Designing Advertisements using cultural communication

Over years, the extensive use of Indian music, songs and dances in Indian films[11] has given a different impetus to the Indian advertising industry. Even the multinational advertising companies have begun to prefer Indian music, dance and songs, mostly drawn from Indian culture, and Indian films, for its product designing for marketing promotion in India. For instance, the weavers' community (belonging to handlooms) in the State of Andhra Pradesh use the designs found in the sculpture of temples/forts such as what is found at Lepakshi for saris produced by them. These saris, which are of high quality designs, have a lot of export value and excel over the machine printing by the large scale textile industrial houses (See Photos 1).

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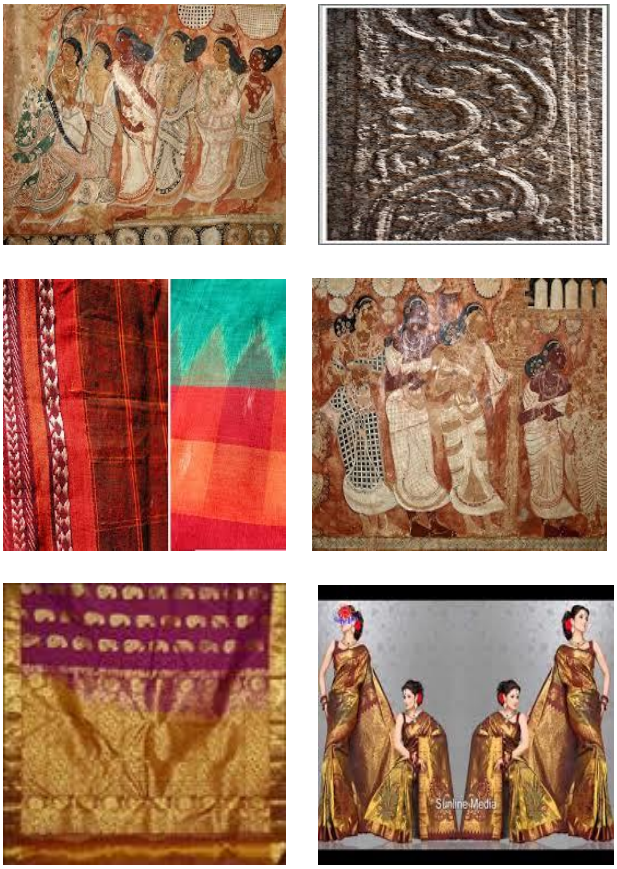
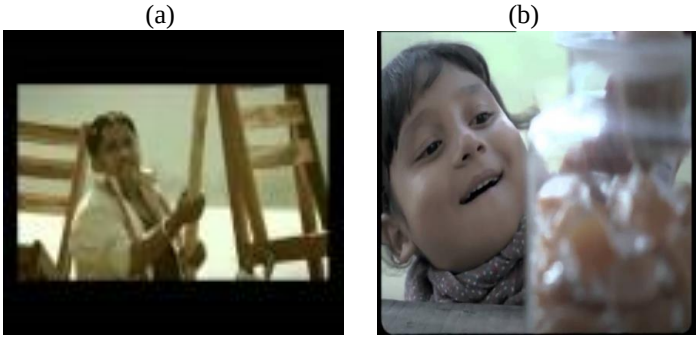


Photos. 1. Culture based product designing-Indian Saris using Lepakshi designs

(a) (b)



Photos 2. Advertisements based on regional folk languages

(a) Fevicol advertisement in Bengali language
(b) Kashmiri children singing in Sanskrit language[12]

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For instance, the Pidilite Company has offered a Bengali advertisement for its product Fevicol which is transmitted on television national networks through cable channels or DTH (Direct to Home). Though other regional language audiences cannot understand the language of the advertisement, its semiotics could easily be understood by any regional person. That is the value of 'Design thinking' in-built in it. Similarly, the ICICI Bank offered an advertisement using Kashmiri children and its picturesque environment in Sanskrit language. Though one cannot understand Sanskrit language so easily, its semiotics used in the building of advertisement 'Designing' makes it comprehensible for every Indian who watches it. These are the examples of native communication models which are emerging from the 'Design Thinking' for market promotion for the corporate sector (See Photos 2).

As mentioned earlier, India has vast diversity in its culture. The regional cultures and national culture cris-cross at certain points giving an impression of 'unity in diversity'. For instance, the *Bharatanatyam*, a product of *Natyashastra*, is the national art form while there are many regional variants to it. *Manipuri* (Manipur), *Kathak* (Punjabi), *Odissy* (Odisha), *Kuchipudi* (Andhra Pradesh), *Perini* (Telangana), *Kathakkali* (Kerala), etc., are the deviants offering the semiotics of local/regional communication (Murthy 2014). These dance forms are used to express the local historical and cultural legends/stories in the form of dance, supported by music and song. At the same time, they are epic based as well. It all depends on the context that they would be used (Murthy 2014).

This apart there are local folk dance traditions in every region. The synthesis between the classical and folk dance and music traditions in a given region is not fully explored. For instance, the dance and music forms that Srimanta Sankaradeva (of Assam region) has created are very least understood by the native Assamese populations. After traveling extensively entire India, Sankaradeva not only founded a new religious tradition--*Neo-Vaishanvite*-- but also established a number of literary, music and dance traditions. They look mostly heterogeneous incorporating the semiotics of Indian epics as well as combining different forms of music and dance traditions.

In other words, the heterogeneity in Indian culture offers vast scope for innovation in Indian communication through 'Design Thinking'. The Jaipur Rugs (carpets), and Kashmiri carpets etc portray the sculpture and art found on the pillars and the walls of the forts and palaces. They belong to Princely traditions (Jaipur) and Mughal traditions in case of Kashmir. In the case of Kashmiri carpets/rugs, the designs vary from portraying the natural ecosystems of Kashmir, such as Himalayas, its abundant snows, snow ridden trees and leaves, besides flowers, the Himalayan Greenery, the flowers in the Dal Lake, the flowering trees of Himalayan region, etc., which captivate the hearts of the buyers at once. The designs are extremely local reflecting on the local culture (See Photos 3 and 4).

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Photos. 3. Jaipur Rugs –Won innovation design awards world wide

Photos 4. Kashmiri Rugs

As the purpose of this chapter is to deal with a design/model that explains how Indian arts (six arts: Painting, Drawing, Sculpting, Music, Dance and Drama) have the potential to connect with mass media education, and how they do well by cross-connecting these art forms to the national/regional communications in terms of research and funding in the Indian Universities having arts and humanities as major programmes, I present here a brief concept of how to modify or develop a course curriculum with the objectives entirely reflecting on native cultures, national cultures and how to connect them globally.

3.3 Constructing a design/model of course curriculum

Just as Lugmayr et al (2015) constructed a course laying down its pedagogical objectives and conducted an experimental trial, the Indian Universities having media departments too can formulate a course curriculum for a similar trial using the foregoing cultural aspects put briefly here. As Lugmayr et al pointed out, the following requirements are essential for any such course curriculum to sustain irrespective of the differences between the East and the West: i. Creation of the right setting, feeling and environment, ii. Collection of course and reference materials to be handed out to students so that they can have a preliminary grasp on what they need to do as 'think out of box' as far as designing is concerned, iii. Attracting an ideal mix of students who have motivation for innovation, improvisation and designing in cross-cultural and interdisciplinary settings, iv. Selection of rights tools, IT infrastructure, and materials for students, to support design think-

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ing phases and v. Establishing a course across one term, that follows the 'Design Thinking' phases and allows traversing back and forth.

As Lugmayr et al put it the student willing to join the course must have certain important personality traits. This is not a field for every one; nor is it exclusively meant for artists, or designers. Empathy, integrative thinking, optimism, experimentalism and collaboration are the basic traits that one should possess. Above all, in respect of cultural 'Design Thinking' one should have a deeper understanding of one's own national and diverse cultures. The idea is to connect the students to their own country's culture and explain/interpret them through different media designs/models as was done by Nirmala Adhikari in respect of dance forms. Her thorough knowledge of ancient scriptures especially, *Natyashastra*, has ultimately enabled her to put into a communication model called *Saadharanikaran* Communication Model (SMC). This is called providing essential background knowledge for the students opting for the course (Lugmayr et al 2015:131).

Lugmayr et al have pointed out that 'Challenge for the students is to generate new ideas in the field of ambient media'. According to them, the ambient media –or also referred to as ubiquitous media-are media that are embedded throughout the natural human environment (the foregoing makes it clear). However, the main aim is to train participants in the method of Design Thinking' by exploring industrial challenges around the topic ubiquitous/ambient media together with industrial partners (p.133). Unlike the West, the Indian Universities are not so much industry connected. Hence, this may not have immediate results for the students in Indian media research/management. Such variations are bound to be there between my methodology and the methodology prescribed by many scholars as well as Lugmayr et al (2015).

3.4 Cultural facets or implications of the course

One of the fundamental aspects of this course is to make student familiar with one's own national and regional cultures and their semiotics besides philosophical connotations (Murthy 2014). For instance the University of Hyderabad has established a school called Sarojini Naidu School of Performing Arts in which Communication is a department. The original expectation was that both Communication department and the Performing Arts department together would produce an ideal mix of Indian communication model just as what Nirmala Adhikary developed from *Natyashastra*. But, while the Performing department has done good job in developing the *Perini* dance form by deciphering/deconstructing the codes on the sculpture of Ramappa temple at Warangal, the contribution of Communication department to national/regional art forms is abysmal. The reason is simple that the faculty of the Communication department is trained in the West and they tended to restrict the growth of the department by importing the Western media theories and ideas (e.g. Community radio). Unfortunately, the Community radio in India as of

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now does not have the reach of a folk art form, let alone any industrial consequence. What the Communication department could have done is to produce an ideal mix of a variety of folk art forms or classical dance/music forms to design communication models that act briskly for indigenous transformations and thus could construct a communication process different from that often borrowed from the West (e.g. Community radio). Using such communication models, the industry could have designed products either by advertisements or by creation of new consumable products. For instance colors in context of Indian advertisements have deeper cultural semiotics as opposed to the Western advertisements. Unfortunately the Western advertisements have been dubbed in to Indian languages, without slightest consideration for their 'relevance' to Indian society. The course curriculum must take a creative and cultural form rather than being strictly theoretical in Western terms. It must be thoroughly Indianized.

As a course out line is drawn, based on the local and regional cultural facets, the course objectives would become clear and its goals would automatically get established. Over a period of time, during which a constant interaction happens between the students and the trainers, the course would get further spruced up/ tightened up.

The early career academics can take up this as a challenge for generating funds for the research and formulation of new courses for 'Design Thinking' in Indian mass communication or media departments.

4 Conclusions

In short the chapter explains how 'Design Thinking' is a multifaceted designing process chiefly meant for designing or redesigning the products based on the users' or consumers 'needs. The 'Design Thinking' applies to a variety of programmes including services. Many scholars, who initiated the concept of 'Design Thinking' as a matter of producing innovations in the domains of architecture and science in the early 1980-90s, gradually extended it to all other spheres of knowledge including culture. Ultimately, the 'Design Thinking' itself transformed in to a culture. The chapter explains how I began my early academic career as a 'designer' for designing educational models to enable Eritrea to achieve rapid educational and economic transformation and how I extended it later to Indian rural transformation as well as Websites.

Further, I explained how I could conceive the relevance and application of 'Design Thinking' for researching the unexplored rich terrain of Indian culture to firstly deconstruct the embedded semiotics in the cultural art forms comprising six arts-painting, sculpture, drawing, music, dance and drama –towards establishing the communication models which reveal or disclose the regional deviations from the national art forms as described in the scriptures such as *Natyashastra*. I further called upon for researching the nuances and differences between the devi-

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ant art forms based on local/regional cultural variations to get to the then contemporary cultures. It is this knowledge that helps establish the new products or designing new products which bear relevance to regional or local needs. Further, the research must be explored to a photo finish level drawing distinctions in the requirements of elite and mass/folks with regard to the consumption of cultural products both at regional/local level. Insights for such a research flow from the current designing concepts adopted in the Indian advertising.

Above all, I explained how the construction of a course for one term requires a variety of traits as described by Lugmayr et al (2015). The environment and the settings which Lugmayr et al have described for University settings will largely remain same though the industry academia link may vary as Indian universities have not built upon the business aspect of products designed at the University level. Except, this rest of the parameters, course objectives and pedagogical inputs will remain similar. As far as I am concerned, knowing the limitations of Indian academy and its students, currently, the 'Design Thinking' can be adopted for researching and deconstructing the cultural aspects of these art forms. The discovery of native communication models embedded in them would be of immense value later to design products based on them for regional/national consumption (e.g. Fevicol). The project calls for an in-depth knowledge and understanding of native and regional cultures relevant to the chosen art forms. Further, the teams of students must have clear commitment to carry out the research as challenge. Given this, the early career academics can use the project proposals of 'Design Thinking' exploring the art forms for research funding by the national bodies to execute the research at University level.

Notes

[2]United Nations Development Programme
[3]United States Agency for International Development
[4] United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organization
[5] International Development Agency which operates on behalf of World Bank for funding of poorest countries in the World (http://www.worldbank.org/ida/)
[6] The participants of all developing countries nearly 1100 have agreed on the Dakar Framework for Action which re-affirmed their commitment to achieving Education for All by the year 2015, and identified six key measurable education goals which aim to meet the learning needs of all children, youth and adults by 2015. In addition, the forum reaffirmed UNESCO's role as the lead organization with the overall responsibility of coordinating other agencies and organizations in the attempts to achieve these goals. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_For_All accessed on Aug 31, 2015).
[7]IDEO has worked on projects in the consumer food and beverage, retail, computer, medical, educational, furniture, toy, office, and automotive industries. Some

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examples include Apple's first mouse, the Palm V PDA, and Steelcase's Leap chair. Clients include Air New Zealand, Coca-Cola, ConAgra Foods, Eli Lilly, Ford, Medtronic, Sealy, and Steelcase among many others.

[8]In particular the *Vedic* culture of India was thought to have been the ancestor of European Classical cultures. Scholars sought to compare the genetically related European and Asian languages to reconstruct the earliest form of the root-language. The *Vedic* language, Sanskrit, was thought to be the oldest of the IE languages.

[9]He was an ancient Indian theatrologist and musicologist who wrote the *Natyashastra*, a theoretical treatise on ancient Indian dramaturgy and histrionics, especially Sanskrit theatre. Bharata is considered as the father of Indian theatrical art forms.

[10] The *Natyashastra* comprises 36 chapters and it is possibly the creation of more than one scholar. It dates from between the 3rd century BCE and the 1st-century.

[11]Indian film industry is one of the biggest film industries in the world producing on an average 1100 films a year (See Murthy, 2012).

[12]Click the link here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SEp6ICkXoWM accessed on Sept 4, 2015.

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